UNITED
NATIONS

CERD

International Convention
on the Elimination
of all Forms of
Racial Discrimination

Distr.
GENERAL

CERD/C/191/Add.1
5 May 1991

ENGLISH
Original: SPANISH

COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION
OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION
Forty-first session

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 9 OF THE CONVENTION

Fifth periodic reports of States Parties due in 1990

Addendum

COLOMBIA*

[18 July 1991]

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* The third and fourth periodic reports submitted by the Government of Colombia and the summary records of the Committee meetings at which the reports were considered appear in the following documents:

Third periodic report - CERD/C/143/Add.1 (CERD/C/SR.841-842);
Fourth periodic report - CERD/C/166/Add.1 (CERD/C/SR.841-842).

GE.92-15637/4558B

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ANNEXES 1/

1. Proposal on Human Rights by the Government to the National Constituent Assembly

2. Colombia's indigenous legislation

3. Policy of the Government in defence of the rights of indigenous peoples and the ecological conservation of the Amazon Basin

4. Gaceta Constitutional, articles approved and brought into line with the Constitution of 1886. First Committee

5. Titles X, XI, XII, and XIII of the Penal Code

6. Title III of the Constitution

7. Title VI of the Penal Code

8. Primer entitled "The Joys of Being Alive" (La Alegría de Ser)

1/ These annexes may be consulted, in Spanish, in the Secretariat archives.

Introduction

1. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia has the honour to submit to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination the fifth periodic report of Colombia on the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

2. To supplement the information provided here, it is suggested that the Committee should consult the following reports submitted by Colombia to the United Nations:

(i) Third periodic report on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

(ii) Fourth periodic report on the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD/C/166/Add.1);

(iii) First report by Colombia on the implementation of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid;

(iv) Report submitted by Mr. Angelo Vidal d'Almeida Ribeiro, Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance.

3. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs takes this opportunity to convey to the Committee the renewed assurances of its highest consideration.

I. GENERAL

4. During the first half of 1991, a process of unprecedented importance in Colombian history took place. A Constituent Assembly, democratically elected on 1 December 1990, is drafting the Constitution that will regulate the lives of Colombian people from July 1992 onwards.

5. This democratic process, which will undoubtedly entail the modernization and updating of our institutions, offers the best opportunity for democratic reconciliation that the country has had.

6. Among the basic tasks that the Constituent Assembly has set itself is the reorganization and strengthening of justice and the drafting of standards clarifying and supplementing the citizen's safeguards and rights as well as mechanisms to ensure that they are implemented.

7. Since Colombia has a rich ethnic heritage with 81 indigenous groups, the Assembly's work on their fundamental rights is very important. In this connection, mention should be made of the indigenous peoples' participation in the Constituent Assembly in the persons of its representatives, Lorenzo Muelas Hurtado and Francisco Rojas Birry, who obtained the support of the people in the elections.

8. This demonstrates the opportunity for participation provided by the Government to the indigenous peoples in a genuine process of debate on their options for development and their problems of integration.

9. At the same time, in recent years the Colombian Government has become increasingly concerned about the welfare of the indigenous communities and has consequently adopted a series of measures to meet the needs and defend the rights of these communities. Some of these measures, including the allocation of land to landless communities, the stimulus given to bilateral and intercultural programmes of education with indigenous teachers, and the increasing recognition of the administrative autonomy of the indigenous lands, are covered in the section of this report dealing with article 2 of the Convention.

10. The Colombian Government is aware of the need to acknowledge and respect the legitimate demands of the Indian communities to maintain and protect their culture, defend ownership of their lands, preserve their autonomy and voluntarily to accept or to reject Western cultural factors that may contribute to their well-being and the definition of their place in our pluralist and multi-ethnic society.

11. In time with this approach, the Government proposed to the Constituent Assembly a set of general principles to regulate the question in the new Constitution. This proposal was studied by the Second Committee of the Assembly and is annexed to this report (Annex 1).

12. The importance attached by the Government to the principle of equality and the defence of the human rights of the indigenous communities was also

reflected recently in the adoption of Act No. 21 of 4 March 1991, which incorporated into the country's legislation the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Convention, 1989 of the International Labour Organisation.

13. The provisions of the Convention with regard to land, frontiers, education, health, natural resources, subsurface resources, credit, participation, communications, human rights, traditional economy, recruitment, vocational training and social security offer a challenge to the Government, which proposes to meet it by strengthening the policies so far adopted and by embarking on a staged implementation of measures to ensure the implementation of the Convention.

14. A general description of the main tasks which the present Government proposes to carry out in respect of the indigenous communities is contained in the section of this report dealing with article 2 of the Convention.

15. In accordance with Part I (b) of the General Guidelines concerning the form and content of reports, the Committee is informed that under the Colombian legal system, international treaties to which Colombia is party have been previously submitted to the legislature for approval in a law in accordance with article 76, paragraph 18, of the Constitution.

16. The provisions embodied in those international instruments are thus incorporated into the law of the country and it is not necessary to issue other legislation regulating the international commitments undertaken.

17. It should be explained, however, that mere legislative approval of treaties does not complete the international juridical link, but that in accordance with domestic law and the rules of international law the instrument of ratification or accession in the case of multilateral conventions must be deposited and the relevant instruments must be exchanged in the case of bilateral agreements.

18. Since the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was ratified by Colombia on 2 September 1981, it may be invoked before the national authorities which in turn may enforce it directly.

19. Various authorities have been set up in Colombia which are responsible for protecting human rights and looking into reports of violations of basic rights, and these are listed in the section of this report dealing with article 6.

20. To conclude this general information, mention should be made of an important agreement on demobilization and disarmament signed by the Government and the Quintin Lame Armed Indigenous Movement (MAQL) on 27 May 1991. This agreement, which includes development and security plans for ex-combatants and for the regions of the Department of Cauca which have suffered the rigours of violence, constitutes a significant step forward in building peace in Colombia, a process which is being consolidated steadily, the MAQL being the fourth group to indicate its wish to return to civilian life and democracy, a task on which the present Government has embarked.

II. INFORMATION RELATING TO ARTICLES 2 TO 7 OF THE CONVENTION

Article 2

21. In Colombia, there is a great diversity of ethnic groups, resulting in an incomparably rich national heritage, both culturally and socially. There are at present 81 indigenous groups, comprising over half a million persons, who speak nearly 75 different languages and inhabit 25 per cent of Colombian territory and have their own social and cultural world.

22. While it is true that until very recently these communities did not receive the care and attention they needed from the State, the situation is being corrected gradually but effectively. Great concern is being shown by the Government to ensure them the protection and development which will allow them equal enjoyment of human rights.

23. In order to remedy situations of marginalization, a number of measures have been adopted to recognize the inalienable rights of the indigenous peoples and assist them with specific policies.

24. The fundamental objective of the Colombian Government in recent years has been to take steps, design projects and support initiatives by the indigenous communities to strengthen the three-way relationship between the State, the indigenous peoples and society.

25. All these activities have been carried out through the Ministry of the Interior's Indigenous Affairs Division (DAI) by the Office of the President of the Republic, using the National Rehabilitation Plan, the National Planning Department (DNP), the Colombian Land Reform Institute (INCORA), the National Insitute of Renewable Natural Resources and the Environment (INDERENA), the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, indigenous organizations and other bodies.

26. One of the serious problems which affected the indigenous inhabitants of the Amazon area of Colombia was the wanton destruction of the natural resources of the Basin. Accordingly, the Government applied in that area the system of national parks and indigenous reservations.

27. The handing over of extensive tracts of land to the indigenous inhabitants did not at any time signify the pursuit of an apartheid policy. On the contrary, it was a recognition of the fact that they are the ancestral masters and that they are preserving the necessary tradition and the customs of their culture in order to utilize the resources in harmony with nature. This measure was an important step both for the protection and promotion of indigenous rights and for the preservation for the world's ecosystem.

28. Its general purpose was to recognize the right of the indigenous communities to the territories traditionally occupied by them, to adopt programmes for the management, conservation, renewal and exploitation of natural resources, to upgrade the reservations by acquiring the developed land owned on them by third parties and allocating them free of charge to

indigenous communities, granting lands to the indigenous communities which had none, and extending the reservations dating back to colonial times by acquiring more land.

29. The reservations, whether those of colonial origin or those set up by the National Agrarian Reform Institute (INCORA), are as follows:

Type of reservation	No.	Total hectares	Persons protected
Colonial	81	399 688	156 680
Established by INCORA 1967-1986	158	12 380 780	127 697
Established by INCORA 1986-1989	63	13 360 641	27 397
Total	302	26 141 109	311 774

30. The legislation on reservations consists basically of Act No. 135 of 1961, Act No. 31 of 1967 approving the ILO Convention concluded in Geneva in 1957 and the New Agrarian Reform, whereby INCORA itself can set up indigenous reservations (Annex 2, p. 151).

31. It is important to stress that the above and other legislative measures adopted under the same policy are not intended to divide the population along any racial lines, to prohibit contacts with other racial groups or to restrict the right to freedom of movement or residence. Rather, the purpose is to preserve the cultural tradition and heritage by arranging sports events, the use of the language and other traditional expressions of each particular tribe.

32. Moreover, in keeping with the Government's purpose, the indigenous communities are guaranteed the right to use the renewable natural resources on their lands and, with the common consent of the various communities, steps have been taken to ensure the monitoring, renewal and sustainable use of those resources. To that end, on the basis of Resolution No. 0997 of 19 September 1987 indigenous inspectors of the natural resources of the reservations were appointed.

33. The Government's steps guarantee the racial groups the necessary conditions to organize themselves in accordance with their own usages and customs by virtue of Act No. 89 of 1890 (Annex 2, pp. 145-149) and to strengthen indigenous participation in decision-making on policies and programmes affecting them, by creating a series of mechanisms with indigenous participation, such as the Municipal Rehabilitation Councils, the Indigenous Affairs Policy Committees and the Sub-Committee of the Commission on Mining Legislation Studies and Reform.

34. Similarly, the Ministry of Agriculture issued Decree No. 2001 of 28 September 1988 establishing the "cabildos indígenas" (indigenous municipal councils) described as "public entities of a special character" and assigned with the task of governing the indigenous inhabitants and administering their territories (Annex 2, p. 155).

35. The indigenous population's powers of self-government were also made stronger in regard to the selection, formulation, implementation, control and direct management by that population of small community projects.

36. The Government's basic premise has been implementation of the rules on the protection of the indigenous communities and safeguarding their rights on terms of equality with other nationals, while preventing racial discrimination and punishing those who perform such acts.

37. With the aim of guaranteeing equal treatment before the law, courses on indigenous legislation have been organized in the various communities; that task was carried out by the Ministry of the Interior's Indigenous Affairs Division, which provided legal assistance for the preservation of traditional values, community rights, territorial development, renewal of the cabildos and studies on the establishment of foundations, corporations and other legal entities. In particular, steps were taken to prevent violation of the human rights of the indigenous inhabitants in areas of armed confrontation with the guerrillas and, in addition, to implement the law which exempts indigenous inhabitants from military service.

38. In recent years, there have been training programmes to acquaint public bodies with indigenous legislation and to make sure that they respect the cultural values of the communities and that public officials, regardless of their status or post, apply the provisions which protect the rights of those communities. In addition, the programmes "Amerindian Thought" and "Human Rights" have been broadcast on the radio. Furthermore, pamphlets on indigenous legislation have been prepared under the National Rehabilitation Plan (Annex 2) as well as a book on the Colombian Government's policy for the defence of indigenous rights and the conservation of the Amazon Basin (Annex 3).

39. Moreover, to promote the welfare of the indigenous peoples and provide them with a stable economy, the Government has supported indigenous initiatives for suitable development of their lands. These programmes have been formulated with due regard for the traditional economic bases of the communities and are based on producing more small surpluses for trading purposes and on guaranteeing basic services and improving infrastructure.

40. Major steps have been taken in farming. In this connection, programmes have related to raising cattle, sheep, and pigs and animal breeding, sugar mills, fish farms, crop improvement and diversification, marketing and low-interest loans.

41. According to the reports of the National Planning Department, in the period August 1986 to May 1990, the Government invested the sum of Col$ 21,444,126,000.

42. Protection of the right to health of the indigenous inhabitants has been strengthened by providing free medical assistance in accord with the traditional medicine of the various ethnic groups. Steps were taken to implement Resolution No. 10013 of 1981, issued by the Ministry of Health, specifying that health services must be provided with due regard for the cultural characteristics of each community and that both the supply of drugs and medical care for indigenous inhabitants must be free of charge (Annex 2, p. 165).

43. The right to education is guaranteed by legislative measures, more particularly in recent years by Decree No. 1142 of 1978, which recognizes ethnic pluralism and sets out the right of the indigenous communities to receive education in keeping with their social, cultural and economic characteristics (Annex 2, p. 163).

44. The main purpose of the entire educational programme has been to enhance the social decision-making capacity of the indigenous inhabitants with regard to their own future, as an essential factor in the exercise of political rights and self-determination.

45. Decree No. 2230 of 1986 set up the National Committee for Indigenous Linguistics Committee, under the Colombian Institute of Anthropology (ICAN), to advise the Government on the formulation of policies for research, dissemination, protection, teaching, the training of experts in ethnolinguistics and the preservation of the Amerindian languages spoken in Colombia.

46. To facilitate access by indigenous inhabitants to higher education, bearing in mind that one of the main problems of the indigenous student population on completing secondary education is lack of money to enter university, the National University of Colombia has taken a decision to ensure that 2 per cent of its available places will be set aside for indigenous candidates.

47. Moreover, the "Alvaro Ulcué" Fellowship Fund has been set up, and the finances are managed by the Colombian Institute for Educational Credits and Technical Studies Abroad (ICETEX); the purpose of the Fund is to support indigenous students in their pre-university and pre-graduate studies.

48. The Colombian Government considers that the policy for the protection of the rights of the indigenous peoples cannot be separated from the measures taken for the conservation and preservation of the Earth's environment. Uncontrolled development is obviously a threat to the whole of mankind, leading, as it does, to indiscriminate exploitation of non-renewable natural resources, destruction of the ozone layer, pollution of the seas and the air, acid rain, climate changes, and nuclear tests and disasters. The Amazon region is vital, not only for the welfare of the indigenous communities that live there, but also for the conservation and preservation of the world's environment. Mindful of that fact, Colombia has decided to conserve the ecosystems and to respect the rights of the indigenous inhabitants of the Amazon region. As a result, areas for special management have been created

and recognition has been given to the rights of the indigenous inhabitants to ownership of the land, use of natural resources, social and cultural self-determination and full participation in taking decisions that affect them.

49. Building on the policies pursued in the past in respect of the indigenous inhabitants, the present Government of President César Gaviria Trujillo proposes that a set of objectives should be formulated, combining the efforts of all the bodies working with indigenous communities, to execute the State's current programmes of modernization, community participation and administrative decentralization.

50. The specific objectives that will be pursued over the next four years and given priority by the Government are as follows:

Land and natural resources

(a) To complete the process of establishing indigenous reservations for the communities where the situation regarding their territory has not yet been defined;

(b) To upgrade the reservations already established and to help to stabilize any colonization that may affect indigenous territories;

(c) To increase the size of those indigenous reservations which are too small for social, economic and cultural development;

(d) To grant land to those indigenous communities which have no land or insufficient land;

(e) To establish reservations with lands and improvements provided by the National Land Fund;

(f) To restructure the reservations set up during the colonial period, whose titles are legally valid;

(g) To support the initiatives of the indigenous population to ensure the preservation, monitoring, renewal and sustainable use of natural resources.

Production

To strengthen the traditional economies and, when it is viable, to permit the free adoption of modern alternative methods of production and self-sufficiency to enable the indigenous communities to give priority to producing more supplies for themselves and additionally to improving their market sales.

Exercise of rights

To consolidate within the existing legal system, the special provisions that protect and establish the framework of the relationships between the State, the indigenous peoples and the other institutions of social and political life.

State administration

(a) To set up coordinating bodies to enable the indigenous population to participate effectively in determining, planning and developing the programmes and services made available to the communities by the State;

(b) To encourage formative processes which will enable the communities to assess their own resources and identify their needs and State officials to identify possible institutional inputs in a context of respect for the identity of the communities;

(c) To improve the administrative capacity and increase the participation of the indigenous communities in the decisions and programmes which affect them, on the basis of their own forms of organization;

(d) To devise mechanisms that will enable State representatives to be informed about the indigenous communities and equip themselves to deal with them in the appropriate manner.

Study

To improve ethnic education programmes, by upgrading the process, increasing their cover and encouraging the research which will serve as its basis, especially linguistic research.

Health

To improve the living conditions of the indigenous communities by initiating participatory primary health care programmes, formulated and developed in the light of the special characteristics of each ethnic group and region.

Social communications

(a) To design a social communications component that seeks to influence globally the perception of the indigenous peoples and to generate a culture that respects and assess their social and cultural worth;

(b) To launch communications strategies designed especially for each sector of the population;

(c) To conduct studies which will enable the communications needs of the indigenous peoples to be ascertained and evaluated and to allow them to develop their own means and processes of communication among themselves.

51. Similarly, the following programmes will be organized in coordination with all the agencies working with the indigenous communities and with the communities themselves.

Land and natural resources programme

(a) In conformity with existing legal provisions, the Colombian Land Reform Institute (INACORA) will complete the process of establishing territorial reservations, for some 35,000 indigenous people, situated in the forest and savannah area;

(b) Measures will be taken to upgrade indigenous territories, by acquiring land developed by settlers located within the reservations;

(c) Land will be purchased for those communities which have lost their land or which have insufficient land or to restructure colonial reservations consisting of smallholdings;

(d) The lands of the National Land Fund purchased specifically for the indigenous communities will be legalized through the establishment of reservations;

(e) Socio-economic surveys will be carried out for the establishment of reservations on uncultivated lands and in order to determine land requirements and the areas likely to affect those requirements by INACORA's acquisition programme for the restructuring of reservations dating back to the colonial period;

(f) Reservations that have already been established will be demarcated and staked out by setting up boundary posts and fences;

(g) INACORA, in cooperation with the Indigenous Affairs Division of the Ministry of the Interior, will examine the titles of the colonial indigenous reservations;

(h) There will be cooperation with the indigenous population to ensure the sustainable development of natural resources, through participatory programmes that will be launched in the areas of education and environmental management and the execution of specific projects for resource replenishment, reforestation and the natural recovery of the deteriorated ecological resources. Special emphasis will be placed on preserving catchment basins and on forest renewal;

(i) The National Institute of Renewable Natural Resources and the Environment (INDERENA) will, jointly with the regional cooperations and the indigenous organizations and authorities, take the necessary steps for the development of community land, by assisting the municipal councils and the traditional authorities in establishing areas of special management, to be set aside for agriculture, forestry, and for a combination of farming, forestry and animal rearing. Similarly, mechanisms will be devised to create ecological barriers to cushion and protect the indigenous territories from the areas of settlement;

(j) Studies will be carried out on the social, cultural and environmental impact of the development programmes, especially those which require infrastructure work, which will affect the indigenous population in some way.

Production and funding programmes

52. Funding and production promotion programmes carried out by State bodies will be based on the following premises:

(a) Use and acceptance of indigenous peoples' know-how and production methods;

(b) Full participation by beneficiary communities in the design and implementation of production programmes;

(c) Support for regional projects relating to technical assistance, transport and product marketing.

53. Production alternatives designed with a view to self-sufficiency, the improvement of the traditional production systems that can be improved and the adoption of technologies suited to the ecosystem will be created in order to strengthen the economies of indigenous communities.

Programmes for the exercise of rights

54. The Indigenous Affairs Division will support and handle recommendations submitted by indigenous councils to the National Constitutent Assembly.

55. The Indigenous Affairs Division will assume responsibility for advising and providing legal protection for indigenous communities and their members. It will take account of the internal procedures the indigenous communities use to settle their disputes and of their customary law and traditional methods of imposing penalties. The Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF) will be responsible, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, for dealing with situations relating to family matters.

56. Efforts will be made to have the Congress of the Republic adopt and ratify Convention No. 169 (1989) adopted by the International Labour Conference in Geneva in June 1989.

Programmes relating to the modernization, adaptation and management of the Government

57. A Permanent National Technical Commission on Indigenous Affairs (CONAI), an inter-agency body with indigenous participation, will be set up to coordinate, follow up, evaluate and adapt Government and supervisory activities on the human rights situation in indigenous communities.

58. In accordance with Decree No. 00312 of 1984, support will be provided for departmental indigenous development committees and encouragement will be offered for the establishment of others in regions where they do not yet exist.

59. Regional Indigenous Development Plans (PREDI) will be formulated and coordinated with the Integration Secretariat of the Office of the President and by the Ministry of the Interior's Division of Indigenous Affairs, with the participation of indigenous communities.

60. The Ministry of the Interior's Indigenous Affairs Division will be restructured in order to make it an administrative, technical and scientific body with its own resources and administrative autonomy.

61. Efforts will be made to establish a committee for the protection of the human rights of indigenous communities in cooperation with the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Human Rights.

62. In order to carry out the activities resulting from this policy, working methods will be standardized and inter-agency coordinating bodies will be set up by means of integration agreements and the provision of more financial, technical and human resources.

Ethnic education programme

63. The guideline will continue to be the ethnic education model adopted in the provisions contained in Decree No. 1142 of 1979, which recognizes ethnic pluralism and establishes the right of indigenous communities to receive an education in keeping with their socio-cultural and economic characteristics (Annex 2, p. 163).

64. Support will be provided for the activities of the National Committee for Indigenous Linguistics, which was set up as an advisory body to the Government for the formulation of policies relating to activities in connection with Amerindian language research, dissemination, protection, instruction and training.

65. Encouragement and support will be provided for indigenous education projects based on curricula designed by agreement with indigenous communities.

66. Support will continue to be given to the Alvaro Ulcué Fellowship Fund in order to facilitate access by members of indigenous communities to higher education.

67. Measures will be adopted to evaluate education programmes and the Summer Language Institute with the support and advice of the National Committee for Indigenous Linguistics.

68. The Ministry of Education and the Indigenous Affairs Division will coordinate activities to keep abreast of the indigenous communities' educational situation. Research work and educational processes will promote recognition of the elements of the indigenous communities' historical and cultural heritage that have declined and may disappear.

69. Objective information on indigenous populations will be included in school curricula in order to create positive awareness of their situation in the country.

70. Encouragement will be provided for free intercultural exchanges based on the particular culture of each community and with a view to facilitating, in a critical way, access to and knowledge and understanding of cultural elements and expressions of the rest of society.

71. Campaigns will be waged to disseminate information on indigenous legislation and knowledge of Indian peoples at the national and regional levels. Special courses will be given to Government officials who perform their functions in indigenous territories and to indigenous organizations and authorities and training will be offered to teachers on the general concept of ethnic education.

Health programmes

72. Efforts will be made to improve the living conditions of indigenous communities by strengthening their traditional systems of medicine and methods of prevention and supplementing them by means of coordinated primary health care programmes. On the basis of Decree No. 1811 of 1990, activities will be coordinated by the Indigenous Affairs Division and the Ministry of Health in order to set up a permanent special technical unit composed of qualified staff to assume responsibility for the full training of medical and paramedical personnel working in indigenous areas, to design and follow up health programmes in cooperation with indigenous communities and to ensure the implementation of the legislation in force in this regard.

73. Studies on the structural factors that affect the morbidity and mortality rates of some indigenous groups will be carried out with the support of the Francisco José de Caldas Colombian Fund for Scientific Research and Special Projects (COLCIENCIAS) and the National Health Institute (INS).

74. The aim will be to provide health services for all indigenous communities and to set up flexible mechanisms for the diagnosis and referral of patients.

75. Where necessary, special programmes for mother-child care will be implemented on the basis of elements of indigenous culture and activities for the monitoring, supervision and treatment of undernourishment and malnutrition will be carried out with the support of the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF).

76. The Ministry of Health will make the necessary changes in Decree No. 1811 of 1990 on the basis of the identification of the problems involved in its implementation and the recommendations made by indigenous communities and organizations.

77. In cooperation with the Ministry of Health, ICBF will set up programmes which cover its specific areas of activity and are designed to strengthen and protect indigenous minors and families on the basis of their own systems and with the participation of each community in food self-sufficiency, endogenous, sociabilization and social supervision Programmes for minors will also be formulated on the basis of the provisions of articles 21, 93, 239 and 311 of Decree No. 2737 of 1989.

Social communication programmes

78. Education programmes will be carried out to create sustained awareness of the value and cultural wealth of indigenous peoples. Campaigns will focus on the meeting of two worlds and will be waged as part of the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Discovery.

79. An information strategy will be aimed at the management, political and institutional sectors and the mass media in order to increase and improve their knowledge so that they might support initiatives taken by indigenous communities.

80. Activities will be carried out for officials of agencies working on indigenous programmes to increase awareness of the value and cultural differences of each indigenous community and the need to respect and protect them.

81. Studies will be carried out on channels of communication within organizations and social participation in indigenous communities in order to start learning about areas of influence and the means they use for communicating with one another.

Operational method

82. In accordance with the legal provisions in force, indigenous policy will be implemented by the Ministry of the Interior through the Indigenous Affairs Division. Agencies which now handle programmes for indigenous communities will take part in the implementation of this policy.

83. Since the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America is being celebrated in 1992, it is hoped that indigenous peoples will achieve specific recognition in the Political Constitution of Colombia and in decisions adopted by the National Constituent Assembly, which, as already mentioned, has two indigenous members who were freely elected in the voting which took place on 9 December 1990.

84. In conclusion, the fundamental and priority objective of Government policy is to improve the living conditions of indigenous communities on the basis of respect for their autonomy, recognition of their right to participation in society, support for social processes to promote self-management and alternative forms of social and economic development, bearing in mind the cultural approach and features of each people.

85. The intention of the Government of Colombia has been and will continue to be to promote the preservation and knowledge of the particular features of indigenous communities and to gear all efforts towards the development of their well-being while ensuring peaceful co-existence with and respect for other sectors of society.

Article 3

86. The Colombian Government's conviction that apartheid is a crime against humanity and that together with racial segregation and discrimination it constitutes a serious offence and a violation of individual rights, led it to accede, through Act No. 26 of 1987, to the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, which thus entered into force in Colombia on 22 June 1988.

87. Colombia has repeatedly supported measures adopted in the context of the United Nations to implement the Programme of Action Against Apartheid and has constantly rejected any policy of racial discrimination.

88. Colombia has no political, diplomatic, military, cultural or sporting links with the Government of South Africa. The Government of Colombia has supported popular movements struggling to eliminate apartheid and to establish a democratic non-racial system in South Africa. Accordingly, Colombia has sponsored and approved a large number of resolutions in the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council (of which it was a member until December 1990), some of which are listed below:

(i) Resolution 44/1. Death sentence passed on a South African patriot;

(ii) Resolution 44/17. Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity;

(iii) Resolution 44/27. Policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa:

A. International solidarity with the liberation struggle in South Africa;

B. International support for the eradication of apartheid in South Africa through genuine negotiations;

C. Comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against the racist regime of South Africa;

D. Imposition, coordination and strict monitoring of measures against racist South Africa;

E. International financial pressure on the apartheid economy of South Africa;

...

G. Programme of work of the Special Committee against Apartheid;

H. Oil embargo against South Africa;

...

K. Concerted international action for the elimination of apartheid;

(iv) Resolution 44/52. Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination;

(v) Resolution 44/68. Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;

(vi) Resolution 44/69. Status of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

89. The Government of Colombia has also hailed the work of Mr. Nelson Mandela and his selfless struggle to achieve the liberation of his people, and has awarded him the "Orden Nacional al Mérito, Grado Gran Cruz" decoration (Decree No. 1433, of 15 June 1988).

90. Colombia was a member of the United Nations Council for South West Africa from 1967, when South Africa's mandate over the territory of South West Africa came to an end. The Council was the sole legal authority that administered the territory until it achieved complete independence. As a member of the Council, Colombia gave its support to all the steps taken to achieve the independence of Namibia and also supported many resolutions, such as resolution 435 (1978) and resolutions 628 (1989), 629 (1989), 632 (1989), 640 (1989) and 643 (1989).

91. On 21 March 1990 Namibia achieved its aim and became an independent nation. Colombia immediately sought to establish formal relations with the new republic, and on 28 April 1990 a joint communiqué was signed at United Nations Headquarters, New York, in which the two Governments established diplomatic relations and confirmed the bonds of friendship and cooperation between them for the mutual benefit of their peoples; the decision was based on mutual respect for the principles of international law and for the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and on the principles of peace, security, economic development and the elimination of all forms of colonialism and racial discrimination advocated by the Movement of Non-Aligned countries.

Article 4

92. Violations of the human rights of any individual are punishable offences under Colombian legislation.

93. As the Committee has already been informed, international instruments are incorporated into Colombian domestic legislation for subsequent ratification. Thus, Colombia has taken on the commitment to protect human rights and is duty-bound to punish those who violate human rights.

94. There have been no instances of such practices in Colombia, although they constitute a criminal offence in the eyes of domestic law, pursuant to article 17 of the National Police Code, which stipulates that "whosoever inscribes or puts up in a public place or a place open to the public an inscription or drawing that is offensive or that constitutes incitement to break the law or to disobey the authorities" shall be placed under arrest.

95. The Colombian authorities for their part may not promote or incite to racial discrimination, on the contrary, they have been established to protect the lives, honour and property of all persons resident in Colombia, in accordance with article 16 of the Constitution.

Article 5

96. As part of the provisions which govern criminal law, the Penal Code in title I, article 8, provides for equality before the law and specifies that criminal law shall apply to individuals without taking into account considerations other than those it establishes.

97. It is thus explicitly forbidden in Colombia to take account of personal considerations other than those actually embodied in the law and implicitly forbidden to make any discrimination on the grounds of age, sex, race, origin or economic, religious or political situation other than may be indispensable for fair and legal criminal justice.

98. This provision is the development of article 7 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights signed by Colombia, which states that all are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of the Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

99. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights was incorporated into Colombian law by Act No. 74 of 1968. Article 26, now part of Colombian legislation, establishes that all persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. Colombian law thus prohibits any form of discrimination and guarantees equal and effective protection to all against discrimination of any kind.

100. The duties, powers and responsibility of civil judges, as set out in article 37 of the Code of Civil Procedure, include their obligation to ensure the equality of parties in proceedings, by making use of the powers conferred upon them by the Code, and to prevent, remedy and sanction, using the means embodied in the Code, acts contrary to the dignity of justice and to the loyalty, rectitude and good faith which should be observed during proceedings, as well as any attempt at procedural fraud.

101. The duty to discharge honourably, carefully and impartially the responsibilities of one's post is included among the rights and duties laid down in title VI of the Statute of the Judicial Service.

102. The right to personal safety and to the protection of the State against any act of violence or any attack on personal integrity is embodied in article 16 of the Constitution which lays down that "The authorities of the Republic are established to protect the lives, honour and property of all person residing in Colombia and to ensure the fulfilment of the social duties of the State and of individuals".

103. In conformity with this rule, the public authorities take preventive action and prescribe penalties in order to provide legal protection for the lives and the physical and moral integrity of citizens.

104. Colombia's laws do not only classify as offences the many forms of homicide but also punish persons who make an attempt on the life of an unborn child. The Penal Code also provides for penalties for those who do not intend to kill but who cause others bodily injuries or psychological harm.

105. Titles X, XI, XII and XIII of the above-mentioned Code contain penalties for various offences, for example, offences against individual freedom, against sexual freedom and modesty, against moral integrity and against life and personal integrity (annex No. 5).

106. In implementing article 5 (b), it has been the Government's policy to reinforce surveillance of its agents and to punish instances of corruption and criminal acts constituting violations of human rights.

107. Colombian law substantially protects the right to take part in elections and to elect and to be elected by means of universal and equal suffrage, as is explained in the reports CCPR/C/1/Add.50, CCPR/C/37/Add.6/Rev.1 and in the third periodic report on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

108. It should be stressed that all the legislation on participation in politics protects this right without distinction or discrimination of any kind. Indeed, the indigenous communities are guaranteed appropriate conditions for their organization, as was indicated in connection with article 2.

109. All the legislation in this regard and particularly the recent reforms of the electoral system has been aimed at modernizing, promoting and reinforcing the electoral system in line with the changes in Colombia's social and political life, by strengthening democracy and by basing the authority to govern on the will of the people, as expressed in genuine and regular elections.

110. The replies by the Government of Colombia to United Nations notes G/SO 214 (71) and G/SO 214 (25-2) comment on these reforms which include referendums for the election of mayors (art. 6 of Legislative Act No. 1 of 1986 and Act No. 78 of 1986), the system of voting cards for the election of the President of the Republic (Act No. 62 of 1988), the amendment of the Electoral Code (Act No. 06 of 1989), and the Statute of Electoral Guarantees (Decree No. 926 of 1990), inter alia.

111. Lastly, as already indicated, the participation of two members of the indigenous population in the National Constituent Assembly is an unmistakable indication of the importance which these communities have acquired in Colombian political life.

112. With regard to article 5 (d), (e) and (f) on political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights, we would suggest that the Committee should refer to the third periodic report of Colombia on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which describes measures taken in recent years to protect and promote the rights of all persons without exception or discrimination.

113. Title III of the Constitution embodies civil rights and social guarantees while title X of the Penal Code establishes the penalties applied to persons who violate any of the rights referred to in those paragraphs (Annexes 6 and 5).

Article 6

114. According to title VI, articles 103 to 110 of the Penal Code (Annex 7) the victim of any act which infringes his fundamental rights may request, in addition to the appropriate penalty, satisfaction or compensation for the damage caused.

115. Mention should be made here of the existence of a number of national bodies responsible in particular for dealing with complaints of human rights violations or with activating the corresponding investigations.

116. The bodies responsible for this undertaking include the Office of the Presidential Adviser for the Defence, Protection and Promotion of Human Rights, whose main task is to induce other State entities and social organizations to take on the defence of these rights. The office of the Adviser has served as a channel of communication enabling individuals and organizations to turn to the State seeking redress for infringed rights or seeking the prevention of possible violations.

117. In its concern for a more timely and more complete report of possible violations, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Human Rights, has set up a national telephone line so that individuals can immediately report, free of charge, from any point of the national territory, any threat to or restriction of the right to life or freedom of Colombian citizens.

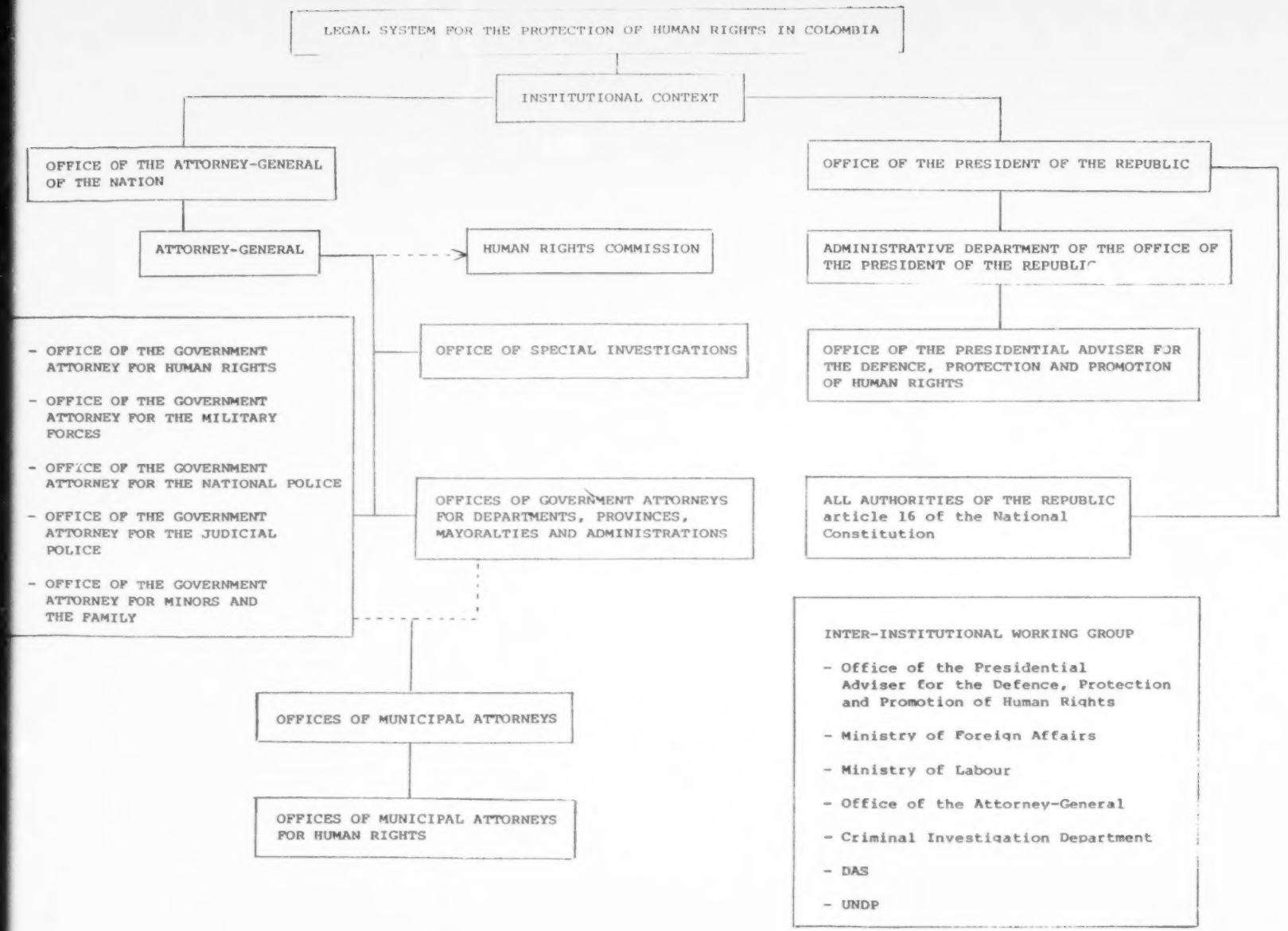
118. In its work, the Office of the Presidential Adviser maintains links with institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Ministry of Justice, the Office of the Attorney-General of the Nation, the National Criminal Investigation Department, the Administrative Security Department (DAS) and the military and police commands.

119. The Office of the Attorney-General of the Nation, which is responsible for dealing with complaints of offences or violations by public officials, was invested with judicial police functions through Act No. 4 of 1990 by means of the Office of Special Investigations. The Office of the Government Attorney for Human Rights will also be invested by this Act with the power to investigate cases of disappearance, homicide and torture committed for any reason.

120. The Criminal Investigation Department recently established a National Human Rights Unit which is coordinating human rights units in all sectional offices, to help all its agents develop a clearer awareness of this aspect and to monitor the investigatory units looking into punishable acts, in order to ensure that the investigations are conducted effectively, without abuses on the part of the forces of law and order.

121. In a major effort to reform the system of investigation, 190 preliminary investigation units were established at various points in the country. As part of the restructuring the Director-General of Criminal Investigation, who is responsible for directing all preliminary investigation proceedings, is appointed by the National Investigation Council, which is made up of the President of the Supreme Court of Justice, the Attorney-General of the Nation and the Minister of Justice.

122. In recent months the Government has taken a number of institutional measures to strengthen judicial activity. In order to provide justice with more effective resources and procedures for punishing the perpetrators of violence, a special public order jurisdiction has been set up, with measures to protect judges and witnesses. Other measures stemming from the recent


LEGAL SYSTEM FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN COLOMBIA
INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL OF THE NATION
ATTORNEY-GENERAL
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
- OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT ATTORNEY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
- OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT ATTORNEY FOR THE MILITARY FORCES
- OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT ATTORNEY FOR THE NATIONAL POLICE
- OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT ATTORNEY FOR THE JUDICIAL POLICE
- OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT ATTORNEY FOR MINORS AND THE FAMILY
OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS
OFFICES OF GOVERNMENT ATTORNEYS FOR DEPARTMENTS, PROVINCES, MAYORALTIES AND ADMINISTRATIONS
OFFICES OF MUNICIPAL ATTORNEYS
OFFICES OF MUNICIPAL ATTORNEYS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT OF THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER FOR THE DEFENCE, PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
ALL AUTHORITIES OF THE REPUBLIC article 16 of the National Constitution
INTER-INSTITUTIONAL WORKING GROUP
- Office of the Presidential Adviser for the Defence, Protection and Promotion of Human Rights
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Labour
- Office of the Attorney-General
- Criminal Investigation Department
- DAS
- UNDP

judicial reform are directed at monitoring situations which increase the risk of violations of individual rights. For instance, military or police bodies are therefore prohibited from making detentions or house searches without the use of uniforms, and the period a person can be held by judicial police bodies is reduced to not more than 48 hours if the person is arrested by military investigation units and five days if he is being held by civil investigation units.

123. In conjunction with the increase in staff, the improved protection of the judiciary and the changes proposed to the Constituent Assembly with a view to giving the judiciary administrative and budgetary independence to enable it to act more forcefully, these are only some of the measures adopted to provide the community in general, including the various ethnic minorities, with better protection and defence of their fundamental principles.

Article 7

124. The work of education in human rights in Colombia involves a social process to be promoted and constructed over the medium and long term. It comprises various phases which accord with the situation in Colombia: the legitimation of the topic, consciousness-raising to encourage personal and institutional receptiveness to these questions and commitment to constructing independent alternatives and processes in human rights, both on a personal and an institutional bases.

125. The entire process requires the building of a society which respects differences. The work of consciousness-raising stems from persons interested in the topic; building a culture of respect means stating the current responsibility of men and women in the preparation of a new social covenant. The struggle is for a society which tolerates contradictions instead of suppressing them, and makes a major effort to progress towards solving questions of authoritarianism, discrimination and intolerance. The programmes for 1989 and the first half of 1990 alone include the following:

(a) Human rights education programme in the formal education system

(i) Design of the programme to structure human rights education within the school curriculum;

(ii) Design of programmes with social research organizations, teachers' unions and research centres to assist in drafting and promoting human rights education programmes;

(iii) Seminar on consciousness-raising with a view to a human rights education with 400 directors of public and private schools in Cundinamarca.

(b) Activities in 1990

(i) Workshop with the Colombian Theatre Corporation on the "right to culture and the culture of human rights". Twelve directors and 40 members of various theatre groups from working-class districts in Bogotá took part;

(ii) Supervision and follow-up of the Agreement between the Colombian Theatre Corporation and the Office of the Presidential Adviser to create 12 plays on human rights using young actors;

(iii) Workshop/seminar with 60 participants in the CEP (Experimental Pilot Centres) of the Ministry of Education from various regions in Colombia who committed themselves to an active share in the human rights education programme sponsored by the Office of the Presidential Adviser;

(iv) Signing of an Agreement with the Ministry of Education for preparing a human rights education programme through the schools for a two-year period;

(v) First national workshop/seminar on human rights education with the participation of the Ministry of Education, non-governmental organizations, the teaching profession, researchers and experts in the matter, and 80 workshop participants from all over the country. As part of this programme workshops/seminars for trainers have been held; their objectives are: (1) To transmit basic knowledge about philosophical, historical, political and legal aspects of human rights; (2) To carry out reflection and analysis for the implementation of the programme in every educational centre; (3) To make commitments to active human rights education;

(vi) In the first half of 1990 seven workshops were held in the cities of Bucaramanga, Pamplona, Cali and Bogota, with a total of 650 trainers;

(vii) A project is in progress at the National University to design manuals to be used as teaching material for the introduction of the topic of human rights in the various university syllabuses;

(viii) Meetings with the group of education faculties of the centre and south-west with the participation of 60 deans and professors. The importance of introducing the topic of human rights in teacher-training institutions was stressed.

(c) The month of July 1990 saw the visit of Dr. Abraham Maguendzo, United Nations consultant and expert in human rights education, who was invited by the Office of the Presidential Adviser for Human Rights and met a total of 300 persons in six different institutions: Ministry of Education, Federation of Educators, education faculties, non-governmental organizations, Inter-Agency Group on the Rights of the Child, Office of the Presidential Adviser for Human Rights, officials of the Valle Education Secretariat and some 30 educators.

(d) Support and advice to the planning team of the Valle Education Secretariat in order to make the topic of human rights an institutional part of its administrative and educational practice. The result: Ordinances Nos. 10 of 1988 and 2 of 1989.

(e) Measures taken and agreement reached with the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights to implement to the full the human rights education project in the south-west and the coffee-growing area of Colombia.

(f) Meeting with leaders of the Association of Primary-School Teachers of Antioquia and rectors, directors and teachers of the north-east and north-west districts of Medellín in order to promote a human rights education project.

(g) Workshop/seminar on human rights with delegates from the 15 regional associations of the National Training Service (SENA) in the country, attended by 100 employees.

(h) National Human Rights week with SENA in all the country's regional associations, from 30 July to 3 August.

(i) Workshop/seminar with 85 rectors, directors and teachers of official colleges and schools in the north-east and north-west districts of Medellín to programme human rights education work aid.

(j) Organization of a workshop/seminar in Medellín on human rights education with 100 teachers from the south-east district for the last week of August.

Promotion and dissemination

126. In order to promote and foster a human rights culture, various activities have been undertaken through the communications media and through direct events designed to achieve a broad dissemination of the doctrinal, philosophical, legal and practical significance of human rights.

127. The Office of the Presidential Adviser for Human Rights has taken part in many national and regional events on the broad theme of human rights, almost always as organizer but sometimes as a guest. The following are some of the most important of them:

(a) Academic meeting for democracy and human rights, Bogotá, December 1987;

(b) Meeting on human rights with mayoral candidates, Bogotá, February 1988;

(c) Seminar on human rights organized by the Nueva Granada Military University, Bogotá, April 1988;

(d) Meeting entitled "Attorneys/and human rights", Cali, April 1988;

(e) The first National Human Rights Week in the educational system. 23-27 May 1988;

(f) Meeting of elected mayors and attorneys in Antioquia, convened by the Office of the Attorney-General of the Nation, Medellín, June 1988;

(g) Meeting on "Combating impunity: progress and difficulties", Bogotá, September 1988;

(h) Commemoration of National Human Rights Day, Cartegena, Bogotá, 9 September 1988;

(i) Seminar on international human rights instruments for judicial officers, Bogotá, October 1988;

(j) Meeting for peace convened by the Javeriana University, Bogotá, October 1988;

(k) UNESCO Andean Parliament Seminar entitled "Contributions in the field of human rights", Caracas, October 1988;

(l) Antioquia Human Rights Meeting, Medellín, October 1988;

(m) Commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Bogotá, December 1988;

(n) Meeting on "Constitutional Reform and Human Rights", Bogotá, February 1989;

(o) Nation-wide competition entitled "Human Rights in Colombia and the French Revolution" for students in primary, secondary and higher education, February-June 1989;

(p) Seminar/workshop for training members of the Technical Corps of the Judicial Police, Bogotá, October 1989;

(q) Campaign on the theme "Human rights are everyone's responsibility", Bogotá, January 1990;

(r) National seminar/workshop entitled "Towards the development of a methodology for teaching human rights", Bogotá, June 1990;

(s) Seminar on "International Human Rights Law and Colombian Domestic Law", Bogotá, July 1990;

(t) Second National Human Rights Week in the educatonal system. 30 July - 3 August 1990.

128. In recent years training programmes have been conducted to ensure that public bodies are acquainted with indigenous legislation and learn about and respect the cultural values of the communities, and that public officials, irrespective of their position or duties, comply with the rules that protect those values.

Publications

129. The Office of the Presidential Adviser has put together a series of publications including primers for mass distribution, posters, folders,

pamphlets, videos, information bulletins on overall activities, records of events and books containing speeches and statements by the Presidential Adviser. The main items are:

(a) Primer: Reflection and Action No. 1. Guide for the Educator;

(b) For the Application of Human Rights, Vol. IX. In the collection "Office of the President of the Republic". September 1988;

(c) Collection of four national postage stamps commemorating Human Rights Day: the right to life, the right to elect, the right to communication, and the right to freedom of association;

(d) Combating impunity. Records of the September 1988 meeting. Edition financed by the Naumann Foundation;

(e) The Attorney's Guide. Three editions, enlarged and corrected;

(f) Reply to Amnesty International entitled "Combating impunity: a democratic undertaking". June 1988. English, French, German and Spanish versions;

(g) Annual Report. January 1989;

(h) Poster on the topic "The rights of the child are the first human rights";

(i) Primer: Reflection and Action No. 2. The rights of the child;

(j) Poster on the topic "Human rights are everyone's responsibility";

(k) Information Bulletins;

(l) The Ombudsman and human rights (The municipal attorney). Bogota, June 1990;

(m) Reply to Amnesty International entitled "The application of human rights: a commitment of the Colombian Government". January 1990, English, French and Spanish versions;

(n) Pamphlet entitled "Strengthening the offices of municipal attorneys and human rights";

(o) Folder entitled "How can we enforce human rights?";

(p) Elements of a human rights policy. Compendium of speeches, lectures and interviews by Dr. Emilio Aljure Nasser, Bogota, July 1990;

(q) The National Rehabilitation Plan of the Office of the President of the Republic prepared a primer on the rights of indigenous people (Annex 2);

(r) A book entitled "Government policy for the defence of indigenous peoples' rights and the protection of the Amazon basin", (Annex 3).

Radio and television programmes

130. Until September 1988 the Office of the Presidential Adviser broadcast a weekly programme entitled "Human Rights" over the Sutatenza channel, in time allotted by the Ministry of National Education. Since October 1988, this programme publicizing the activities of the Office and the content of human rights instruments has been broadcast over the National Radio Network twice a week, together with a programme entitled "Amerindian thought".

131. The televised messages, either in the form of regular spots or longer programmes, which the Office has managed to broadcast over both national and regional channels are well known.

132. It has also been an ongoing concern of the Armed Forces to give instruction at the different levels of command on how human rights should be respected. In this context, human rights have been publicized through:

(a) Phamphlets intended for the rank and file, containing instructions and recommendations on how to treat civilians;

(b) Pamphlets containing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

(c) Documents on human dignity and human rights;

(d) A pamphlet entitled "Fifty questions and answers on human rights and United Nations action to promote them";

(e) Training standards for officer-cadets and for students at the training schools for non-commissioned officers;

(f) Circular No. 002149-MDPD-VJ-789 of 7 December 1983 from the Office of the Attorney-General setting standards for judicial vigilance to ensure that military justice is appropriately, fairly and efficiently administered and applies the same standards when examining the conduct of public servants and ordinary citizens in the proper performance of their duties.

(g) Meetings, lectures and seminars on human rights, with the participation of specialist lecturers, for military personnel of different ranks.

133. A plan is also being put forward for the national police. It incorporates the rights of citizens in the training programme for 600 officers at Bogota and Medellín.

134. The Office of the Presidential Adviser for Human Rights will shortly devote special attention to introducing relevant training material into the educational system, in agreement with teachers' unions, and will provide courses on human rights for members of the forces of law and order.

135. The most recent document published and distributed by the Office of the President of the Republic of Colombia within the human rights education programme in schools is provided as an annex. This primer, which is entitled "The Joy of Being Alive" (La Alegría de Ser), seeks to help children and young people to understand the bases, significance, importance and implementation of human rights so that they develop the necessary aptitudes and attitudes to take part as responsible citizens in society and to become active defenders of those rights (Annex 8).